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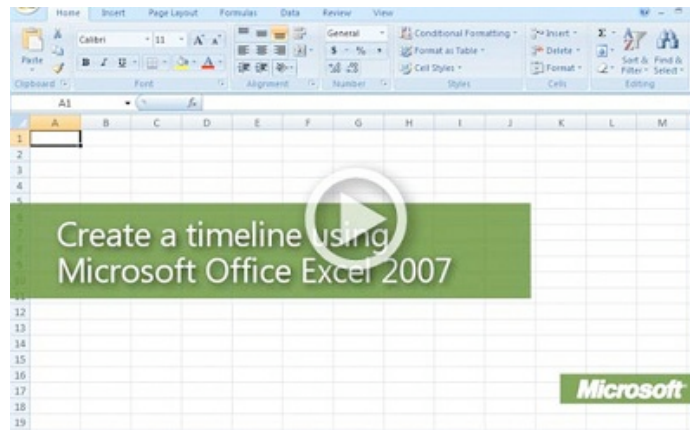
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Create a timeline using Microsoft Office Excel

Software required: Microsoft Office Excel 2007

Show your students how events relate over time by laying out the information along a timeline. Timelines can tell stories, show progress, support themes and ideas, summarize details, and help students visualize trends and understand the big picture.

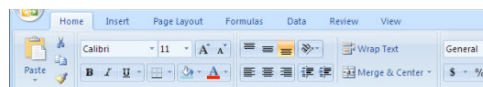


What to put in a timeline

Text, SmartArt graphics, and pictures give the visual elements, and you use the Office Excel 2007 grid to accurately lay out and align the elements. Younger students can even build a timeline with pictures instead of words. These samples and step-by-step instructions will give you an idea of what can be done.

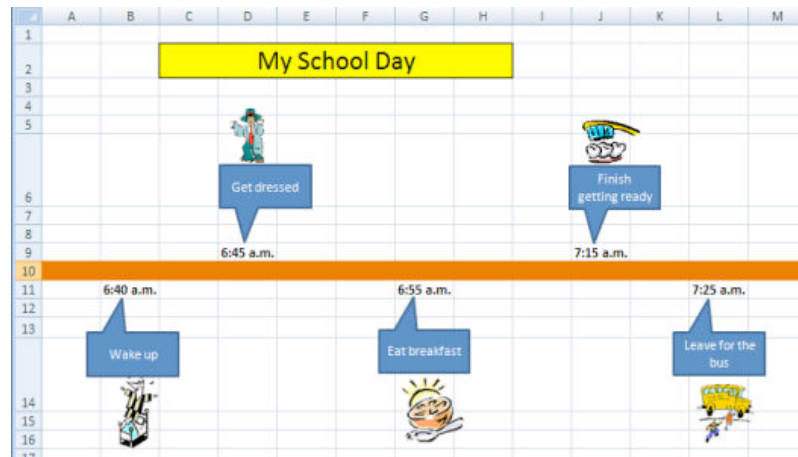
Sample timelines

This timeline uses angled text within cells, borders around the cells, and cell fill colors.



You can add cell colors and angled text to your timeline.

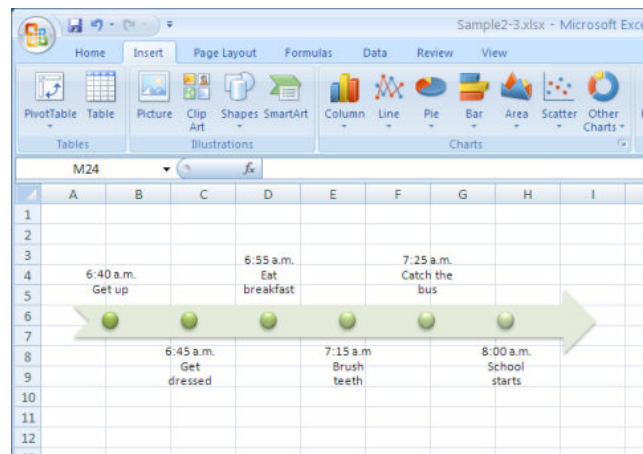
This timeline uses callout shapes, cell fill colors, and clip art. To add a callout, on the **Insert** tab in the **Illustrations** group, click **Shapes** and then select a callout or any of the other shapes. Then, type a caption.



Try using callout shapes and clip art to enhance your timeline.

Two variations on these timelines:

This timeline was created with SmartArt. You can choose a pre-built SmartArt timeline framework that includes all of the graphical elements and then add your text. You can further customize the look of a timeline by applying a SmartArt style.



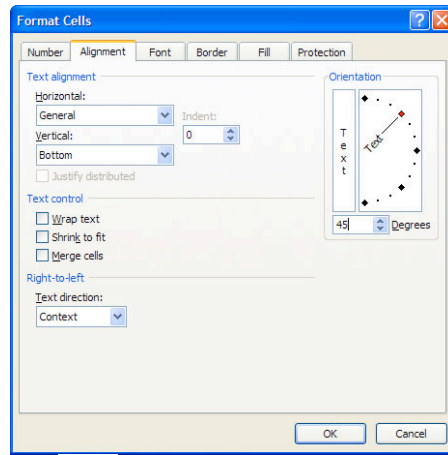
You can build a timeline with SmartArt.

How to create a timeline

The first set of steps shows you how to create a basic timeline with text, lines, pictures, shapes, and formatting. The second set describes how to use SmartArt to create a timeline. After you understand the basics, you can enhance the look of your timeline by exploring other formatting and graphical tools and features, such as background colors, cell styles, borders, and picture effects.

Create a basic timeline

1. **Plan your timeline:** Do your research, and then sketch out a timeline on paper.
2. **Start Excel** with a new, blank worksheet.
3. **Add a title** across the top of the worksheet, and format the text.
4. **dates or times** in a row, several rows below the title. Format the dates now, or wait until you have entered all of the data.
5. **Type short descriptions** in the row above or below the date or time.
6. **Orient the description at an angle** to conserve horizontal space. Select the text. Then, on the Home tab, in the Alignment group, click the Orientation button and select an angle. For more choices, click Format Cell Alignment to open the Format Cells dialog box. In the **Orientation** box, drag the line next to **Text** up or down, or enter a number in the **Degrees** box to set the angle manually.

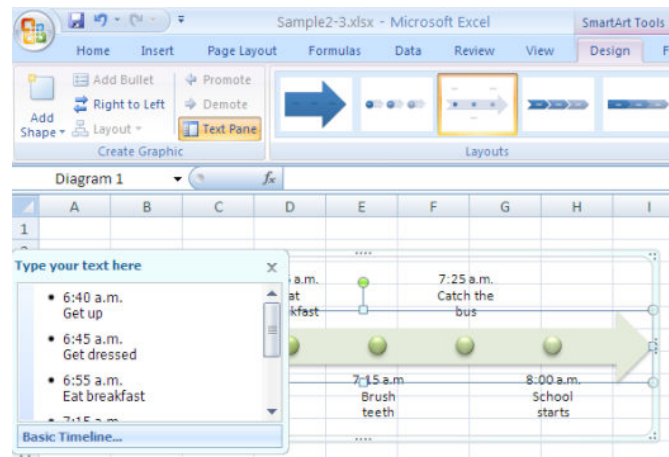


Tip: To save time, you can format groups of cells instead of each individual cell. For example, if you select all of the description cells and then choose an orientation angle, the formatting will be applied to all selected cells at the same time. You can also save time by using the Format Painter. Format one cell the way you want it. Then, select the cell and, on the Home page in the **Clipboard** group, click the **Format Painter** button. To apply that same formatting to one or more additional cells, click and drag across the cells.

7. **Add a Picture, Shape, or Clip Art.** On the **Insert** tab, in the **Illustrations** group, click **Pictures**, and select a file on your computer. Or click **Clip Art**, and then, in the **Clip Art** task pane, select **Clip Art** from the gallery installed on your computer or the from the [Microsoft Office Online](http://www.microsoft.com/office/online) Web site. Or click **Shapes**, and select a shape. Then, drag the image or shape to position and resize it. Select the shape and start typing to add text to it.
8. **Apply additional formatting**, such as font type and size, color, and styles, to the elements in your timeline. For more options, on the **Home** tab in the **Cells** group, click **Format**, and then click **Format Cells**. Here you can access cell formatting details. On the **Border** tab, you can add or remove borders, add border colors, and choose a line style.
9. **Adjust the width of columns and height of rows.** Use the **Format Cells** dialog box to enter sizes manually, or drag the border between column or row headings. Select multiple rows or columns to change the sizes of all those selected at the same time.
10. **Add color to cells.** Select the cells you want to color. Then, on the **Home** tab in the **Font** group, click the **Fill Color** button, and select a color.

Create a timeline with SmartArt

1. On the **Insert** tab, in the **Illustrations** group, click **SmartArt**.
2. In the **Choose a SmartArt Graphic** dialog box, in the left navigation pane, click **Process**.
3. In the center pane, select a timeline thumbnail. The right pane displays the details of the selected thumbnail.
4. Click **OK**.
5. Position and resize the graphic by dragging the border, or resize areas (the dotted areas on the border).
6. To add text, click a text placeholder and start typing, or click the arrows on the left border and type text into the text entry box.
7. To add formatting and styles, select the SmartArt graphic and then select options on the SmartArt Tools **Design** and **Format** tabs.



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